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U. S. Department of Agriculture
War Food Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

May 10, 1945

MEAT

HIGHLIGHTS

Where We Stand

CIVILIAN CONSUMPTION per person has been above pre-war levels throughout the war, but this year may average below pre-war.

MILITARY REQUIREMENTS have risen through the war and this year will take about a fourth of the total supply.

LEND-LEASE SHIPMENTS have been declining for two years, and this year only about half as much meat is allocated as was sent in 1943.

MEAT PRODUCTION rose 52 percent above pre-war to an all-time peak in 1944, and this year it will be about 9 percent below last year's record and 39 percent above pre-war.

Why Meat is Short

The main reasons why many people can't get meat now are:

1. Highest military requirements of the war, more than offsetting lower lend-lease shipments.
2. Continuation of record wartime incomes which boost demand about 40 percent above the civilian meat supply.
3. Distortions in distribution, hitting hardest those supplied from federally inspected plants, which must set aside about half of their meat for government procurement.
4. Black markets, which deprive some people of their fair share of meat because others get more by paying above ceiling prices or without red points.
5. The usual seasonal low in meat production during the second and third quarters of the year.

6. Meat production this year off 9 percent from the 1944 record because of a decline of about 20 percent in pork, arising from the low feed supplies of the 1943-44 crop year.

What the Government is Doing

Farmers are being asked to produce all the meat they can.

The government is dividing up the meat as fairly as possible, but every claimant had to be cut below the amounts requested--civilians, lend-lease and military.

Steps are being taken to get more meat into federally inspected plants, from which it can move across state lines as well as into government hands.

Congress has granted OPA more funds to enforce its drive against black market operations.

What the Public Can Do

Everyone can help share the meat fairly by buying and selling only within ceiling prices and with the exchange of the proper number of red points.

Everyone can cut waste to a minimum.

Housewives in particular can stretch the meat supply by learning how to use alternates that are high in protein.

Farmers can help the immediate situation by increasing poultry production, by marketing animals as soon as they are ready, and by complying with the new OPA regulations which are intended to move more animals into federally inspected plants.

Farmers can also help the long-run situation by meeting their high goals for the season--raising 37 million pigs this fall and marketing about 35-37 million head of cattle and calves in 1945.

MILITARY REQUIREMENTS

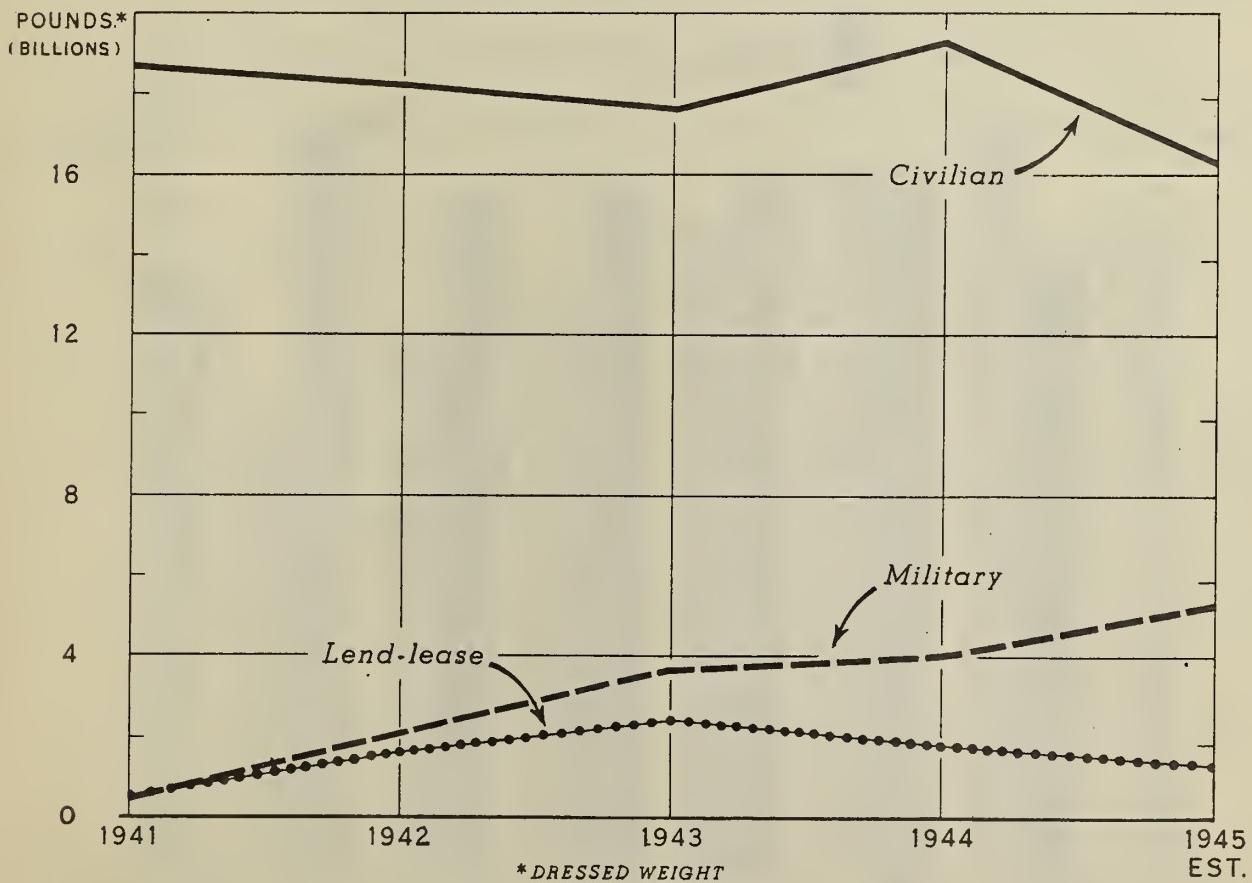
ONE reason for lower civilian meat supplies is MILITARY requirements, which have increased steadily since Pearl Harbor and this year are the highest of the war.

We have more men under arms and more overseas and spread over wider areas, which means having supplies on hand at a great many points. The average soldier eats over 5 pounds of meat per week, compared with an average of 2 to 3 pounds (wholesale weight) normally consumed by civilians.

The rise in military use of meat has more than offset a decline in lend-lease since 1943. In pounds, only about half as much meat is allocated to lend-lease in 1945 as was shipped in 1943.

In the first half of 1945 the division of meat is 68 percent for civilians, 24 percent for our armed forces, 7 percent for lend-lease, and 1 percent for miscellaneous uses.

WARTIME USE OF MEAT



CIVILIAN DEMAND

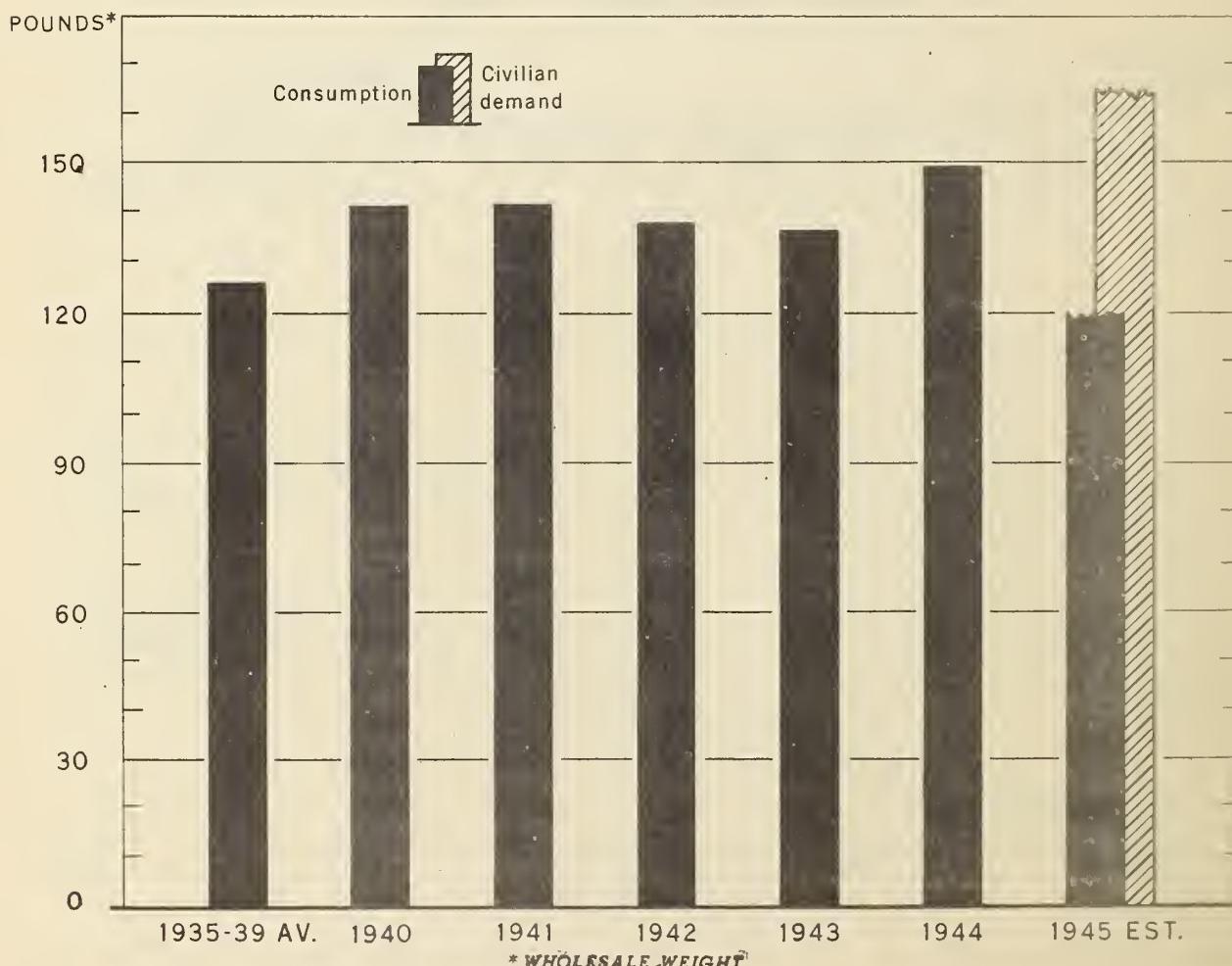
SECOND reason for the tight situation on meat is the tremendous civilian demand arising from record wartime incomes.

The median family income is now about double what it was in pre-war years.

The average civilian would eat perhaps 160 to 170 pounds of meat this year (wholesale weight) if there were plenty of it for purchase at ceiling prices. The allocation to civilians in 1945 is about 120-125 pounds per person, compared with a near-record high of over 147 pounds last year and an average of 126 pounds in the pre-war period 1935-39.

For the year as a whole, the civilian meat supply will not be very much below pre-war, and from the nutritional standpoint it will be up to par when other protein foods are added. However, we feel the pinch so acutely because we have more money to buy meat than ever before.

UNITED STATES MEAT CONSUMPTION PER CAPITA



DISTRIBUTION DISTORTIONS

DISTORTIONS IN DISTRIBUTION constitute the THIRD reason why many people can't always find meat in the stores.

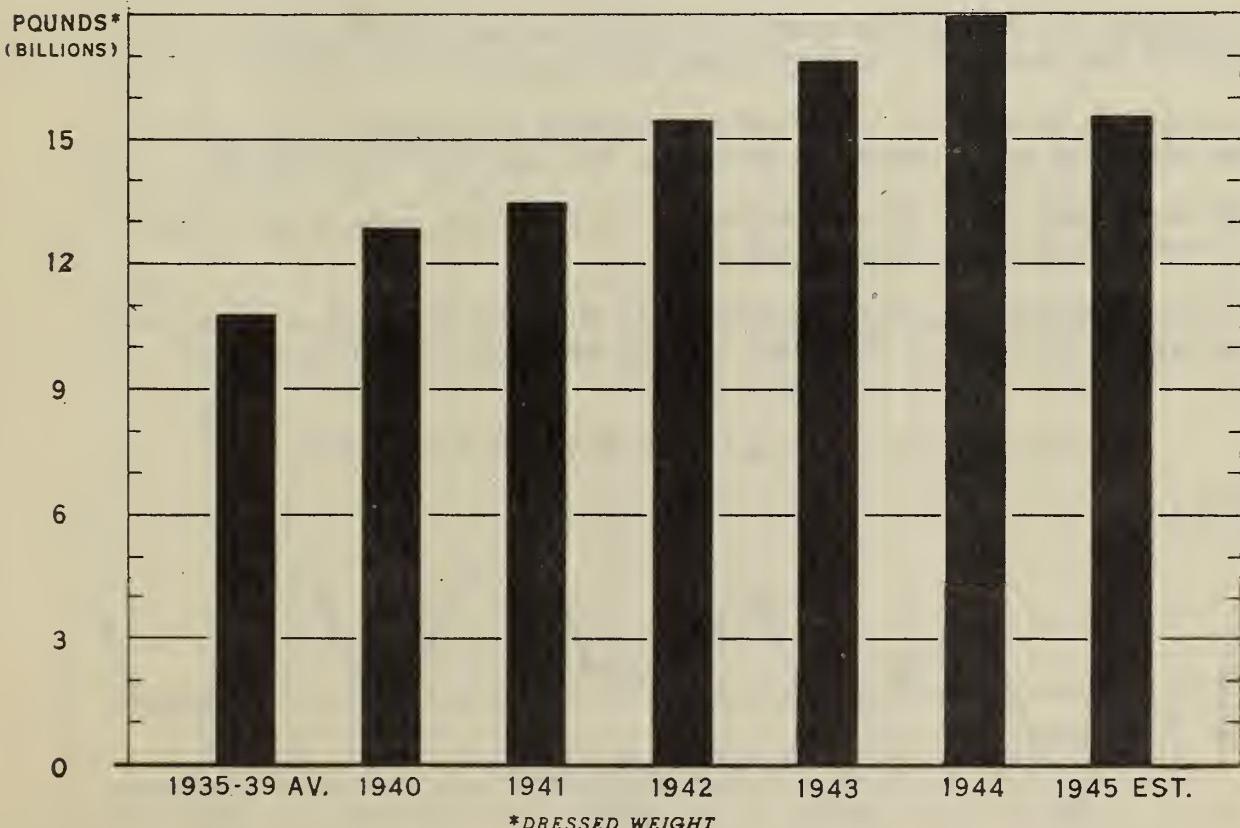
The only meat that can move across state lines is from federally inspected plants, from which the Government buys practically all of its meat for military, lend-lease and other uses.

While government requirements this year are higher, the proportion of meat in these federally inspected plants is lower.

As a result, the meat shortage has hit hardest those people who are supplied from federally inspected plants—notably war workers and others living in large cities dependent upon inter-state shipments.

A better distribution of meat is expected to result from (1) continued increase in the number of plants having federal inspection; (2) shifting a larger proportion of meat to federally inspected plants through slaughter quotas, changes in subsidy rates and ceiling prices, and other measures.

FEDERALLY INSPECTED MEAT PRODUCTION



BLACK MARKETS

The BLACK MARKET is the FOURTH important reason why some people cannot get their fair share of meat.

When some people get more than their share by paying above ceiling prices or not giving ration stamps, the result is that others get less.

Most black market transactions are not made by racketeers, or even by intentional violators, but rather by ordinary people who unknowingly or unthinkingly buy or sell meat without regard to price ceilings and ration points.

The black market is financed by pennies—seemingly innocent overcharges paid by a great many consumers and extending back through the channels of trade to the original source.

If the black market gets out of hand, the whole meat distribution system can break down, so that nobody can get meat without being a law-breaker.

On the other hand, there will be no black market at all if everyone will make sure that he never, even unintentionally, buys or sells meat at more than ceiling prices or without exchanging the proper number of red points.

SEASONAL LOW

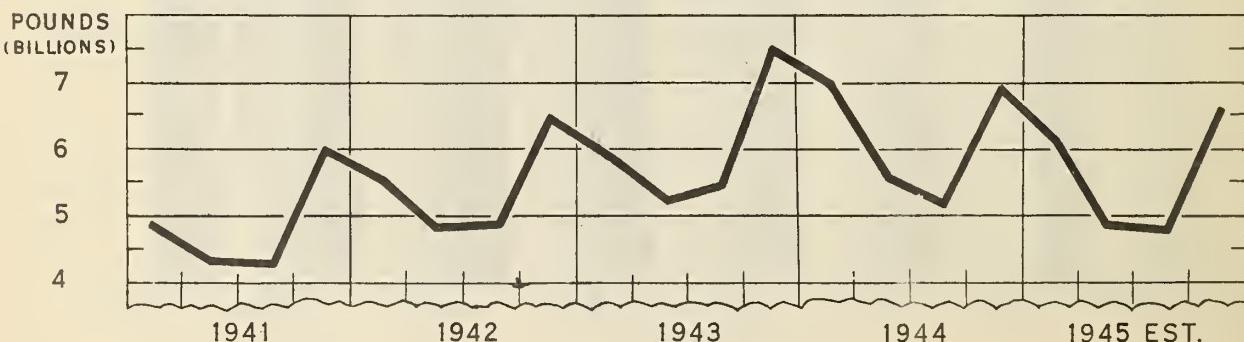
FIFTH reason for the meat shortage at present is that meat production is SEASONALLY the lowest in the second and third quarters of the year.

Few cattle are marketed until after the grass on the ranges dries out, and spring pigs will not be marketed until the fall and winter of 1945-46.

In the six months April through September, the civilian meat supply will be the lowest of any period during the war.

Meat production will increase seasonally in the last few months of the year, but a large proportion of this meat will be required for military use.

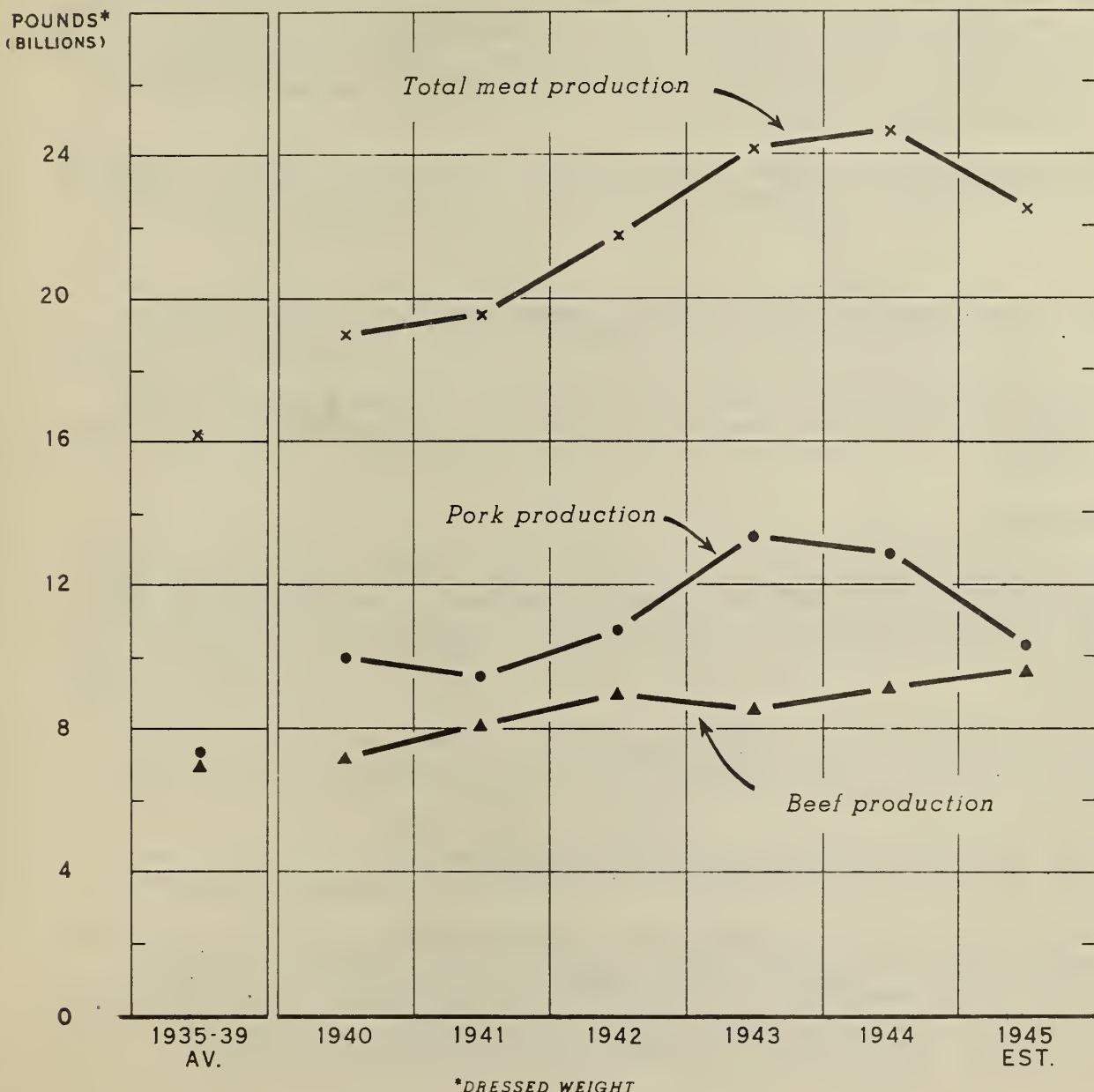
MEAT PRODUCTION, BY QUARTERS



PRODUCTION

SIXTH reason for the current meat shortage is a decline this year in meat production, despite an increase in beef, due to a drop in PORK, arising from the low FEED supplies in relation to record animal numbers during the 1943-44 feeding season.

PRODUCTION OF TOTAL MEAT, PORK, AND BEEF



Meat production rose rapidly during the war to an all-time peak in 1944 but is down this year. From pre-war to 1944 it rose 52 percent. This year it is about 9 percent below last year's record but 39 percent above the pre-war average for 1935-39.

Beef

Production of beef and veal is expected to reach an all-time high in 1945, about 40 percent above pre-war (1935-39 average).

Beef and veal production is dependent upon a long-term cycle in cattle numbers. In the present cycle, the number of cattle on farms rose for six years to an all-time peak of 82,364,000 head at the start of 1944. Cattle numbers were reduced to 81,760,000 head at the beginning of 1945 and can be expected to continue downward for several years.

A record slaughter of at least 35,000,000 head of cattle and calves is expected this year, and that will increase beef supplies this coming fall and winter.

Pork

During the war, pork production rose 82 percent from the 1935-39 average to a record high in 1943, then dropped slightly in 1944 and more sharply in 1945.

This year pork production is expected to be about 23 percent below the 1943 peak, 20 percent below last year, but still 40 percent above the pre-war average for 1935-39.

Feed and Meat

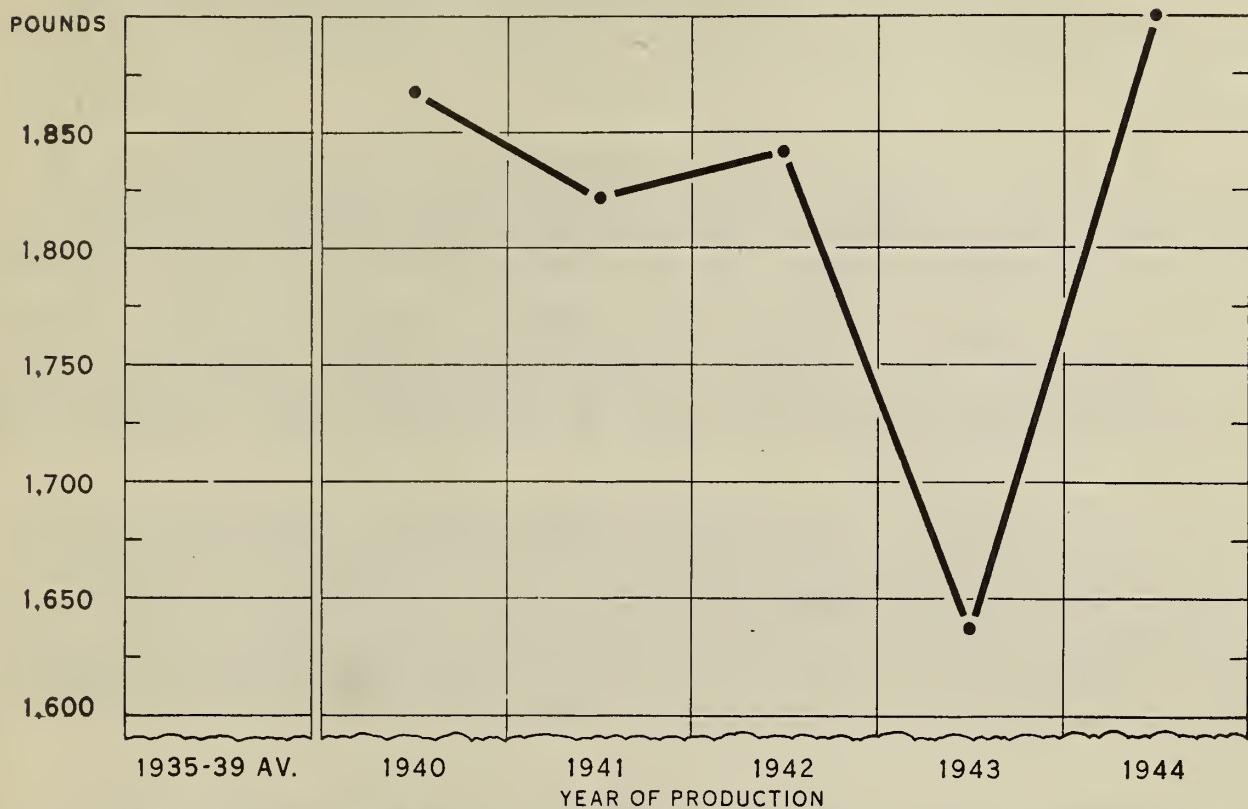
Large reserves of feed grains and excellent crops in the early war years made possible the tremendous increase in pork production to its 1943 peak. Then, although feed grain production was maintained at high levels, the number of animals to be fed increased so rapidly that feed reserves ran low in the 1943-44 season.

Because of shortage of feed, WFA recommended a downward adjustment of about 15 percent in the 1944 pig crops, but the actual reduction turned out to be nearly twice that much, namely 29 percent.

Pork from the 1944 spring pig crop has been consumed this past winter, and pork from the 1944 fall pig crop will be consumed this spring and summer.

Feed supplies in relation to animal numbers have improved, especially because of a record corn crop last fall and a smaller number of hogs and chickens. Feed supplies are expected to be adequate for the near-record number of cattle on farms, for a spring pig crop of about 52 million head, and for a fall pig crop of about 37 million head, in addition to an increase in poultry.

FARM SUPPLY OF FEED GRAINS PER UNIT OF LIVESTOCK
(FOR 12-MONTH PERIOD BEGINNING JULY 1 OF YEAR SHOWN)*



*TOTAL PRODUCTION OF CORN, OATS, BARLEY, AND SORGHUM GRAINS PLUS FARM STOCKS OF CORN AND OATS JULY 1, PER UNIT OF GRAIN-CONSUMING LIVESTOCK (INCLUDING CHICKENS) ON FARMS AT THE END OF THE CALENDAR YEAR

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NEG. 45249 BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Thus, our current meat problems are mainly due to....

1. HIGHER MILITARY REQUIREMENTS
2. LARGER CIVILIAN INCOMES
3. DISTORTIONS IN DISTRIBUTION
4. BLACK MARKETS
5. SEASONAL LOW PERIOD IN MEAT SUPPLY
6. LOWER PORK PRODUCTION, DUE TO FEED

WHAT THE GOVERNMENT IS DOING

The Government is doing all it can to increase the production and improve the distribution of meat.

Production

As has been the case throughout the war, farmers are being asked to produce all the meat that can be obtained from all the feed that can be grown within the limits of available land, manpower, machinery; considering priorities for other farm products also; dependent as usual upon the weather and other uncontrollable factors.

Farmers are being asked to increase poultry production as much as possible, because that is the quickest way of boosting meat production. Chicks hatched this spring will be ready for marketing by late summer and early fall. OPA has recently raised price ceilings on young chickens an average of $1\frac{1}{4}$ cents per pound. (Press releases, USDA 423-45 and USDA 534-45.)

The goal for the fall pig crop is 37,000,000 head, which is 18 percent more than the 1944 fall pig crop of 31,325,000 head. For this coming fall pig crop, the breeding season is this spring, farrowing this fall, and marketing during the second and third quarters of 1946. OPA has announced that there will be no lowering of the price ceilings on hogs through the end of that marketing period, and WFA has recently raised the support price to \$13.00 per hundred pounds for hogs weighing up to 300 pounds. (Press releases USDA 655-45, USDA 714-45, and USDA 741-45.)

This year's goal calls for a record slaughter of 35-37 million head of cattle, from one to three million more than the previous high in 1944. Farmers are being urged to market their animals as soon as they are ready for slaughter. OPA has removed price ceilings on feeder cattle and calves sold to non-slaughterers for feeding for more than 30 days. Also OPA has announced that the reduced ceiling price for cattle scheduled to become effective at mid-year has been cancelled. This is designed to increase the number of cattle moving to feedlots. (Press releases USDA 96-45, OWI 4298, OPA-T-3139.)

Distribution

The Government is dividing up the U. S. meat supply as fairly as it can with a total supply considerably short of record civilian demand, the highest requirements for our armed forces of the war, and the critical needs of our allies and liberated people. All of the major claimants are getting less than they would like to have. Liberated peoples are receiving practically none. Lend-lease is down to about half of the 1943 amount. Our armed forces are getting all they need but with stocks cut to the barest working inventories. U. S. civilians are receiving less than pre-war, but enough to make up the difference with other protein foods. The allocation for the first half of 1945 is: 68 percent for civilians, 24 percent for military use, 7 percent for lend-lease, and 1 percent miscellaneous.

Steps are being taken to ease the problems arising from increased demands on federally inspected meat accompanied by lower output:

1. The number of plants having federal inspection, after increasing from about 300 in mid-1943 to about 500 at present, will be increased still more, with an immediate goal of 10 percent of Army procurement from plants not now supplying the Government.
2. A greater proportion of meat will be shifted to federally inspected plants by new regulations recently announced by OPA: (1) changes in subsidy rates and ceiling prices providing more incentive for federally inspected slaughter; (2) slaughter quotas for plants not having federal inspection, based on percentages of their 1944 slaughter; (3) requiring farmers to obtain by July 1 a license for slaughter for sale, limiting such slaughter to the same amounts as in the corresponding quarters of 1944, requiring the collection of red stamps and selling within ceiling prices for such sales, calling for monthly reports on such sales, and urging farmers to sell their cattle on the hoof whenever possible.

Congress has granted OPA an additional \$565,000 for enforcement in a drive against the black market, which is diverting meat from legitimate trade channels and depriving some consumers of their fair share. Meanwhile, OPA is immediately assigning 500 more investigators to the enforcement of meat regulations, and additional action is being taken by the Departments of Treasury and Justice. (Above actions are described in press releases OWI-4298, OPA-5518, OPA-5522, OPA-5532, and OPA fact sheet, "The Meat Control Program".)

WHAT THE PUBLIC CAN DO

1. Help Lick the Black Market. Consumers, retailers, processors, slaughterers, producers—all can help in sharing the meat supply on a fair basis by never buying or selling at more than ceiling prices or without exchanging the proper number of red points.

It is true that consumers do not set the prices they pay, and neither do the farmers set the prices they receive; therefore, the main responsibility for avoiding black market transactions is on those who do set the prices—those in between the farmer and the consumer. Nevertheless, black market transactions—either without ration points or at prices above ceilings—constitute a chain running all the way from the consumer through each step in the trade channel back to the source of the meat supply. This chain can be broken at any point by the simple process of making sure that no meat is bought or sold without observance of the rationing and price control regulations. Thus it is everyone's job to help lick the black market in meat.

2. Cut Waste. Meat is so scarce, and so vital to the war, that we cannot afford one ounce of preventable waste. This too is a responsibility of everyone who produces, slaughters, processes, buys or sells, or prepares meat for the table.

3. Stretch the Supply. Housewives can to a large extent make up for meat shortages by proper preparation so as to retain the most food value and by learning how to use alternates (when plentiful) that are high in protein--particularly milk, eggs, fish, cheese, peas, beans, and to some extent whole grain cereals. The practical science of nutrition is a weapon all housewives can use to stretch the supply...just as if they were actually producing millions of pounds! It will take extra planning and shopping and care in preparing meals—but it will pay dividends in better diets, and it gives housewives the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping to make up for the meat that we are supplying to our fighting men.

"How-to-do-it" information may be obtained from local nutrition committees and home demonstration agents, from State agricultural colleges, or from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture. These bulletins contain many helpful suggestions:

- "99 Ways to Share the Meat," AWI-13
- "Meat for Thrifty Meals," Farmers' Bulletin 1908
- "Poultry Cooking," Farmers' Bulletin 1888
- "Cooking with Soya Flour and Grits," AWI-73
- "Dried Beans & Peas in Wartime Meals," AWI-47
- "Egg Dishes for Any Meal," AWI-89
- "Cheese in Your Meals," AWI-16

4. Increase Production, and Make It Count. Farmers can do their part in improving the meat situation by (1) increasing production as much as possible; (2) marketing cattle on the hoof and sending them to market as soon as they are ready for slaughter; (3) when they slaughter for sale—obtaining a license by July 1, collecting points and turning them in to their local War Price and Rationing Boards, staying within ceiling prices, reporting their sales to OPA, and limiting their sales to the same amounts as in the corresponding quarters of 1944.

(New OPA regulations dealing with farm slaughter are explained in press releases OWI-4298, OPA 5518, OPA 5522, and OPA fact sheet, "The Meat Control Program.")